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THE OBSERVATOR.

Remarks on Mercurius Politicus, *on the Notion of the Abuſe of the* Clergy Promoters *of* Fears *and* Jealouſies, *the worſt of Enemies. The Miſchiefs done by the* High-Flying Clergy *to the State and Trade of* England. *Advice from* Paris. *Of a* French *Government.*

From Wednesday November the 14th, to Saturday November the 17th, 1705.

Country-m. MAſter, I have brought you the *Politick Mercury* of *Saturday* laſt, wherein he makes a great Noiſe about the *Churches Danger*, Grounded on the Abuſe of the *Clergy*. I have read over Dr. *Eachards Contempt of the Clergy*, and I proteſt, therein, I find the *Clergy* the greateſt *Occaſion of their own Contempt*; and adding to that *Their Behaviour* at the late *Elections*, it adds much to their *Scandal*. Who have Oppoſed the Queens deſire of *Peace* and *Union*? The *High-Flying Clergymen*. Who ſtrook the firſt Blow, and diſturb'd the Peace of our *Elections*? The *High-Flying Clergymen*. Who have Scandalized Her Majeſty, Publiſh'd the *Dangers* of the *Church* thoughout the *Kingdom*, and endeavoured to create *Fears* thereof, and *Jealouſies* among the People? The *High-Flying Clergymen*. And if we Recriminate upon 'em, and tell the People the *Deſigns* of theſe Men thereby, and perſwade them that the *Church is in no Danger*, then even from this the *Churches Danger* is ſurmiz'd. Theſe, Maſter, are unaccountable Proceedings.

Obſ. Honeſt *Country-man*, the Author of *Mercurius Politicus*, is trying how Impudent he can be, and how far he can Affront Her Majeſty and *Government*. Her Majeſty in Her moſt Excellent Speech from the *Throne* has told Us, *That the Church is in no Danger*; the *Lords* and *Commons* have concurr'd with Her Majeſties Sentiments in that Point, and have told Us, that *Such as advance thoſe Suggeſtions, are the moſt Spightful and Dangerous Enemies to the Church and State*; and yet for all this, this *Virulent Libel* is ſtill Trumpeting forth the *Churches Danger*.

Certainly, every Honeſt Man ought to concur with the Opinion of the *Eſtates* of the Kingdom; the *Private* Opinions ought to give place to that of the *Publick*; and it can be eſteemed only a piece of *High-Church Breeding* and *Manners* to give Majeſty it ſelf, and the *Legiſlators* of the *Realm*, the Lye.

The laſt time we parted, I concluded with ſhowing you, *That the Church is in no Danger* from Her Majeſty; and 'tis eaſie to prove *She* is in leſs *Danger* now than ever from the People.

For if we take a view of the whole Kingdom, and the Minds and Tempers of the People, no Age can produce ſuch a Union of Minds, and Harmony of Affections. The *Church* has ſtill its *Rights*, its *Officers* their *Benefices*; and thoſe that are ſo unhappy as to diſſent from Her, are yet ſo happy as to enjoy their Liberty as *Engliſhmen* and *Chriſtians*. All the Stumbling Blocks in our way to Happineſs are either taken away, or laid ſo low that we can paſs over them with an eaſie Step. We have a clear *Horizon*, a *Sea* as ſmooth as a *Pond*, no Storms or Tempeſts Invade our *Hemiſphere*, unleſs now and then ſome *High Flyer*, with an *Impotent* and *Corrupted Breath* puffs at the *Throne*; or ſome *Sucking Leviathan* diſturbs our Waters, and like a *Porcupiſce*, portends future Storms and Tempeſts.

As nothing in the World can weaken more the Power of *France* than a good Underſtanding, and Hearty Union among *Engliſhmen*; ſo our *Inteſtine Jars* and *Animoſities* do as much ſtrengthen the Common Enemy. This our back Friends know full well, and take all Opportunities of blowing up the Coals of *Contention*.

To foment *Diviſions*, and to prevent *Union*, alike anſwers their End: What *Remora's* have they not projected? What *Stumbling-Blocks* have they not caſt in the way to *Peace*? Infinite are they in Number, and the moſt Heinous in their Nature. When all their Projects of *Contention* have fail'd 'em, in Arraigning even in the *Government* it ſelf, then have they had recourſe to *Religion*, and in the Name of *God* have done the *Devils Work*.

The Sham of *Hereditary Deſcent*, and *Primogenture Doctrines* Calculated for the Meridian of St. *Germains*, not taking place; the People being ſatisfy'd with *Parliamentary Securities*, and fully contented with the preſent *Settlement*, now the *Danger* of the *Church* is Trump'd up, as ariſing from the Abuſe of the *High-Flying Clergy*, believing that a *Bigotry* in the People, might fix their Minds on *Objects Excentrick* from the *Publick Intereſt*; and that ſince our Neighbours have been known to Fight for *Wooden Gods*, we ſhould once be ſo Mad as to engage for *Wooden Prieſts*.

For, pray, who are the *Clergy*, that theſe Men reckon Abuſed? Did ever a Nation pay a greater *Veneration* to the *Fathers* of a *Church*, than is paid to the preſent *Biſhops*? Is there a ſingle *Clergyman*, in the whole Kingdom, that demeans himſelf as becomes his *Sacred Function*, that is not the Object of every good Mans Eſteem and Reſpect? And can the Gowns of *Contentious Wicked Clergymen*, be a Protection againſt the Reſentment of the People? *God* forbid that ever ſuch *Bigotry* ſhould poſſeſs the Hearts of *Engliſhmen*.

As the *High-Church Laicks*, when in Power, call'd *Themſelves the Government*, ſo the *Diſaffected Prieſthood* call *Themſelves the Church*. 'Tis a Maxim in the Schools, *Denominatio Sumitur a Majori*. 'Tis the greater and not the leſſer Number that gives the Denomination or Title. The *High-Flyers* muſt have a Wonderful Aſſurance to call themſelves the *Church*, ſuch a Puny Inconſiderable Number of Men, that compar'd to thoſe who are of the contrary Opinion, are in view like a *Mole-Hill* to the *Mountain*; they are the little Flock, the ſmall Remnant of *Paſſive-Obedience* and *Arbitrary-Power*, that expect to be ſav'd,

when

when the Pretenders shall come to *Judgment*. What a Dust do these *Insignificant Flyers* make on the Axle-Tree of our *Government*!

'Tis true indeed the whole *Kingdom* is disgusted at the Behaviour of the *Inferiour Tacking Disaffected Clergy*, and well may we when they Abuse not only the *Queen*, the *Ministry*, and the *People*, but run Counter to the *National Interest*, and yet make a Noise of I know not what, as if *the Church were in Danger* from the just Reflections cast upon 'em, these empty Tubs make a great Noise, and by their Clamour one would think their Numbers are great, when the whole *High-Flying Party* does not exceed one Tenth part of the whole Kingdom.

Divisions always render a Nation uneasie; they may Perplex, tho' they cannot Ruin a Kingdom; and our Divisions are the most Unreasonable of any; the Major part of the Kingdom, I mean the *Low-Church* and the *Dissenters*, are firmly United in Respect to the *Government*, and do agree in Point of *Religion*, as good *Christians* United in the Bond of *Peace*. What then disturbs the *Peace* of our *Israel*, but a parcel of *Black Incendiaries*, who serve at the Altars only as Stokers to stir up the *Fire*, and not to offer up the *Incense*, and would be ready to Excommunicate any one that shall but so much as talk of a *Peace-Offering*.

This sort of Clergymen have ever been the Bane of *Religion*, and the Perpetual Disturbance of the *State*. What Infinite Mischiefs shall we find done by them, if we Trace our *English Histories*? How have they wounded *Religion* and the *Church* of *Christ*, by Persecuting its Members? And thereby what Irretrievable Mischiefs have been done to the *State*! Who sent our Manufacturers a Travelling to *Germany* and other Countries? Was it not the *Persecuting High-Flying Clergy*? The chief Persons concerned in our *Woollen Manufacturers* being *Dissenters*, were thrust'd by the *Churches Bulls* into Foreign Countries, and carried the Manufacture with them, that never return'd; nor have our People since been able to bring that Manufacture to its full Improvement, by which the *Crown* suffers in its Duties, and the *Nation* wants Employment for its Poor.

How many Towns in *England* have Reason to Curse the Days of *Persecution*, and to have in *Eternal Abhorrence* the very Memory of the *High-Flying Clergy*, who Persecuted the Substantial Traders from their Towns, so that there is hardly the Name of Trade left in them.

What Blots and Blemishes have they fix'd on the Annals of those *Kings* who have been so Unfortunate as to be *Govern'd* by their *Councils*? For which we need look no further back than the Reign of King *Charles* II. Who was it advis'd the Surrender of *Dunkirk*, some say the Sale of it to the *French*? Who supply'd the *French* with Naval Commodities, Models of Ships, and Ship-wrights to Build 'em, but those very People that now make a Noise for *High-Church*, and would create in us *Jealousies* of the *Churches* Danger? Who rendered the *Crown* Contemptible in that Reign, by employing Miscreants as Servants under it, by the Infamous Title of *Informers*, and Rob the *Dissenters* under pretence of *Recusancy* and *Non-Conformity*, Selling their Goods at half value, and making no return of the Money into the *Exchequer*, or the Overplus to the right Owners? Who Scandaliz'd that King by Licensing a Paper of these Abuses, boasting of the Spoils committed on *Protestant Dissenters*, Written by an Infamous Wretch, one *Hilton*, who Stiled himself His Majesties *Informer*? Who did these things? The *High-Flying Clergy* and their *Abettors*. Who took that Scandalous Wretch, *L'Estrange*, for their Guide? The *High-flying Clergy*. And who made him large Presents for his Services against the Publick? The two *Universities*.

Honest *Country-man*, tho' I was very Young at that time, I remember very well the Practices at that Day. I have seen the Train-Bands of the City of *London* tearing *Dissenters* out of a *Conventicle*, when at the next Door in a Tavern the Members of *High-Church* have been *Swearing*, *Cursing* and *Blaspheming*; and in the Reign of King *James* the Second, have I seen the same Train-Bands Guarding the *Mass-Houses* from the Just Vengeance of the People.

Honest *Country-man*, I could mention many other particulars of the Behaviour and Practices of *High-Church* in those Days: and 'tis Evident that the same Spirit still remains among those, whose Abuse, *Mercurius Politicus* says, *Endangers the Church*: But how can the Church be in Danger from the Abuse of Men who are Enemies to their *Spiritual Fathers*, and Consequently to the *Church*, who have no Affection for the *Queen*, the Head thereof, or the least Respect for the *Protestant Succession*. But more of these People the next time we meet.

Country-m. Master, these People design a *French Government* by all these *Clamours* and *Jealousies*, that's for certain; and here's the *Flying-Post* gives us a Specimen of that *Government* in the News from *Paris*.

That the *French* King has made a Decree for the Recruiting his Army, that all Young Men from 18 to 40 shall be put into a List, and that these Men shall cast Lots who shall serve till the Number is compleat. And that he who absents himself from his Parish shall be sent to the *Gallies* without further process, and that this Number of Men shall be in a Readiness against the last of *December* next ensuing.

Now, Master, this is the *Government* that our *High-Flying Clergy* would have in *England*, and 'tis pity to Abuse 'em, poor Harmless Creatures, that would not suffer your Countryman *Roger* to leave his own *Parish* and go to Market with a Load of Corn, for fear he should be wanted to go into the Army. Are'nt those Prisoners, Master, that can't go out of their own Parish? And an't they odd sort of Freemen that may, at the pleasure of a Tyrant, be sent away to *Flanders*, *Spain* and *Italy* with *Muskets* on their Backs, and empty Satchels without a bit of Bread and Cheese in 'em. Ah happy *Englishmen*! that can go and come when they please, that can sit under their own Vine, Eat their own *Beef* and *Pudding*, and Drink their own *October* unmolested, and out of danger of being sent to the Wars, a Sacrifice to the *Ambition* of a Cruel Tyrant. All *People* are bound to venture Life and Limb in Defence of the *Queen* and *Realm*, but thanks be to *God* we don't go to the Wars by the Decree of the *Prince*, but by the Decree of the *Parliament* chosen by our selves.

And this *Government* by Decrees would our *High-Flying Clergy* have in *England*; we thank 'em heartily for their Kindness, but we won't come under that *Government*. From such a *Government* and such a *Clergy*, Good Lord deliver *England*. Amen.

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